

# SAYS TOWNSEND MEASURE STRENGTHENS ROAD PLAN

H. G. Shirley, of Federal Highway Council, Replies to Secretary Houston's Objections.

## CENTRALIZES DEVELOPMENT

Under Present Federal Aid Law Government Must Deal With Frequently-Changing Personnel of Forty-Eight Highway Departments.

WASHINGTON, June 28.—Legislative attention, from the standpoint of highway development, is beginning to center upon the national highway bill introduced in Congress by Senator Townsend. This measure provides for the creation of a federal highway commission and the establishment of a national system of highways. It is presented by its supporters as a piece of legislation designed to bring about the construction of a national highway system within a reasonable length of time, to co-ordinate all the highway activities of the government and to publish statistics and data on highway transportation, construction and maintenance for the benefit of all the people.

Secretary Houston, of the Department of Agriculture, has raised a question as to the desirability of the proposed legislation. In reply to an inquiry from a city chamber of commerce recently, he stated that the roads in each section of the country vary in degrees of importance in the service rendered as that may be rendered to any particular locality, that the traffic conditions vary greatly in the different sections, that the State highway departments are better able to classify the roads than anyone else, that under the present Bankhead bill the government is co-operating with the classification of the roads, and when the classification has been carefully made, and by agreement between the State highway departments of adjoining States, the roads of first importance generally meet at State boundaries.

Having the above points in mind, the Secretary added that he could not see the wisdom of "substituting for the present co-operative plan a plan which would commit or limit the Federal government to the construction of two Federally owned trunk line highways in each State."

**Says Bill Does Not Interfere.**  
H. G. Shirley, member of the Federal highway council, and former State highway engineer of Maryland, stated that the national highway bill does not in any way interfere with the co-operative plan now existing among the States with the Federal government. It only substitutes for the Secretary of Agriculture the Federal highway commission, which, under the law, is charged with the duty of carrying out the provisions of the Federal aid law as now operated, and all other obligations or contracts entered into by the Secretary of Agriculture with the respective States. Therefore, the effectiveness of the Federal act, plan, as argued by the Secretary of Agriculture, will not be interfered with in the least. The bill has further made it the duty of the commission to make a recommendation to Congress as to the future operations of the Federal aid law after 1921.

**New Piece of Legislation.**  
"The national highway bill is entirely a new piece of legislation. Its object is to build in each State trunk line highways to the extent of not less than 2 per cent nor more than 5 per cent of the total mileage of the State,

and to join them up with the main trunk lines of other States so as to make a complete national system connecting the entire country together. It creates a system of national highways, independent of the States, and highways that will carry interstate traffic and that are necessary for the welfare of the country as a whole.

"Under the present Federal aid law the Federal government has no power to select the roads in any one State that will be improved. The initiative is with the State highway departments, and in many instances is really with the counties themselves, who have to put up the State's portion of the money.

"The only limitations prescribed by the Federal aid law are that the roads shall be rural post roads. When a road has met this condition, it is the duty of the Secretary of Agriculture to give his approval to its construction. All Federal aid projects start with the forty-eight different State highway departments, and such projects are considered in forty-eight different lights, by forty-eight different men, holding forty-eight opinions, and it can be seen that a national plan that would evolve from such a procedure would be most chaotic, to say the least. It is also impossible under the Federal aid law to co-ordinate the forty-eight State systems that a plan would be finally evolved that would form a connected system throughout the country in a lifetime.

**Personnel Constantly Changing.**  
"The personnel of the State highway departments is constantly changing, and in a more or less degree the State highway systems are changed with the changing of the State highway officials. It is therefore out of the question to expect any connected system of roads between the forty-eight units, over which there is no supervisory power of anyone with authority to bring these forty-eight units into accord, or to direct them in improving those roads that would form a national system.

"Many of the States have laid out a system of State highways. A number of these highways are designated by law and have been laid down by the Legislatures, and are not always the roads recommended by the State highway departments. Even these roads are being constantly changed at each meeting of the Legislatures, so that the system as now laid down will not be the system as finally constructed. Many of the roads as laid out in the State systems on which Federal aid is being expended, should not and never will be classified as national highways, but they constitute a large portion of the mileage of the plans that have been approved as a general State system, and on which there has already been granted Federal aid.

**Will Take Years Under Old System.**  
"It will take many years to complete these State systems under the Federal aid allotment, and at the present rate of construction it will be at least fifty years before there will be connected up a few roads in all the States approaching a national system, and at least 100 years before the entire State systems have been completed and built up so as to form a general system of roads, from which a reasonable national system could be established.

"We have seen the road work of the country expand from the township unit into the State aid unit, from the unit into the State aid unit, from the State aid unit into the State unit, from the State unit into the Federal aid unit, and it is but logical and reasonable that the final steps should be taken by establishing a Federal unit.

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Agricultural Department of the government and put into the hands of a strong commission, who will devote its time and energy to this most important work of the nation, and place it in the position it should occupy to be the most benefit to the people.

"The advocates of good roads are only asking in this national highway bill that the roads should be put on an equal footing with the other departments of the government, so that they can be given proper consideration and study, for there is no other pursuit of the Federal government that will develop and bring prosperity to the country to a greater extent, for the money invested, than the speedy improvement of its important highways.

## MANUFACTURERS OF TIRES BUY COTTON PLANTATION

Purchasers Made to Get Their Fabric Product.

The purchase by several large automobile tire manufacturers of big cotton plantations in the South from which to get the cotton fabric which goes into their products, is regarded by officials of the Hanes Rubber Company, makers of the famous Hanes tires at Winston-Salem, N. C., as added proof of their contention that the truth is the logical place for a tire plant.

Basing their belief on experience gained through generations of manufacturing enterprise, the Hanes tire

builders in considering the location for their plant, did not hesitate for an instant in choosing the great Piedmont section of North Carolina, where they are surrounded on every side by plantations on which the cotton is grown, and by factories in which the fabric is manufactured in its stoutest and best form. The service satisfaction which these tires have given from their first introduction on the market is largely a result of the care in selecting the cotton fabric, which is almost as large an item in the building of a tire as rubber.

Alex. S. Hanes, president of the Hanes Rubber Company, foresees a great future for the tire business in the South, and he points to the wonderful growth of his plant as an indication of the possibilities here. Since the resumption of business on a big scale after the war ended, Mr. Hanes has been compelled to add constantly to the force of employees and to the output of his plant, until to-day he has reached a maximum production of 250 tires every twenty-four hours. But the demand has also increased in proportion, and the Hanes tire is now used in preference to all others by thousands of motorists throughout the Southern States.

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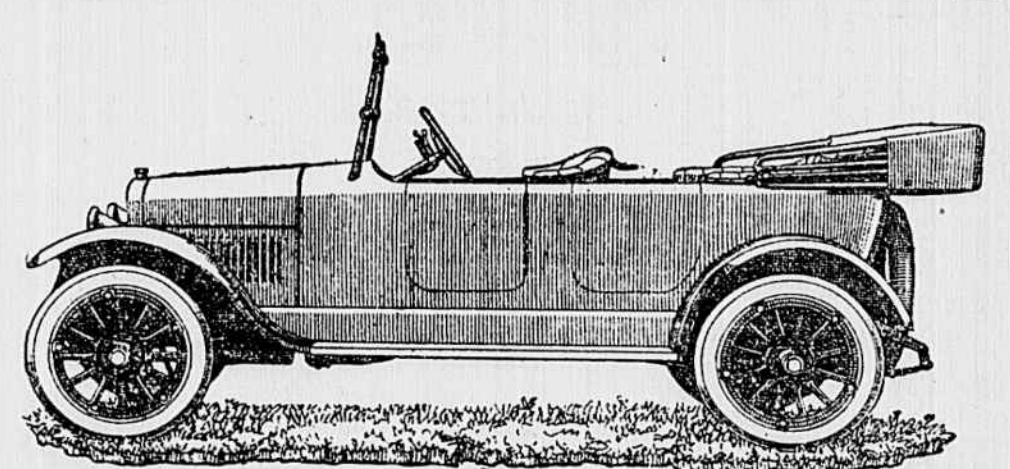


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